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DEVELOPING A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FRAMEWORK
FOR THE UNITED STATES VIRGIN ISLANDS

VL2000

VIRGIN ISLANDS PLANNING OFFICE

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GOVERNMENT OF
THE VIRGIN ISLANDS PLANNING OFFICE

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OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
VIRGIN ISLANDS PLANNING OFFICE

P.O. Box 2606
Charlotte Amalie, St. Thomas, V.I. 00801

To the People of the Virgin Islands:

We sincerely hope you will take a few minutes out and read the attached report. It represents our best thinking about how comprehensive planning should be done in the Virgin Islands.

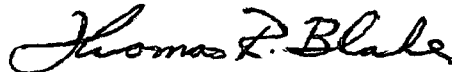
Our purpose in writing this document is to promote a broad discussion of the future course of these islands. It is an opening sentence in what we hope will become a vigorous community dialogue entitled "Where Are We Going."

Many of us, and I include myself, don't often stop to consider what life will be like in the year 2000 A.D. Yet, it is only twenty five years away! Presuming that there are no major catastrophes between now and then, we estimate that the population of the Virgin Islands could reach 200,000 persons more than double today's population. Now that is something to ponder. Where will people live and at what will they work?

Comprehensive planning won't give us any exact answers, but it will provide us with a way of anticipating some of the more confounding issues.

The time is upon us to take a long hard look at what's in store for the Virgin Islands during the next quarter century. It is in this spirit that we offer VI2000 for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Thomas R. Blake
Director of Planning

NC:TRB:sbdp

DEVELOPING A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
FRAMEWORK FOR THE
UNITED STATES VIRGIN ISLANDS:
VI2000

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Virgin Islands Planning Office, Government of
the Virgin Islands, Charlotte Amalie,
Virgin Islands, May, 1974.

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1

WHY COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING?

It would be fair to say that comprehensive planning is one of the most difficult and yet most essential endeavors that a people can undertake. It is difficult because planning attempts to preview the future. Yet no one, including planners, knows for sure what surprises the future holds.

In some ways, previewing the future is like watching a series of slides where each succeeding image is fuzzier than the one before it. It is the work of comprehensive planning to unscramble and to make sense out of the blurred images. At its most fundamental level, comprehensive planning is the organized process of making informed guesses about the possible future of a society.

This document, VI2000, suggests how we might begin the work of looking at the future of the Virgin Islands in a systematic way. The report begins by reviewing and evaluating those

comprehensive plans that have already been written for the Territory. This is followed by a short analysis of current Virgin Islands law related to comprehensive planning. Taken together, these two sections constitute a backward glance at what comprehensive planning has been in the past and the legal basis for its present accomplishment.

The next section of the report describes the feelings, ideas, and visions of the staff of the Virgin Islands Planning Office regarding comprehensive planning. It is primarily the result of a one-day seminar in which all members of the Planning Office staff participated. This material is augmented by comments from planners in other government agencies. Finally, VI2000 lays out a suggested work program for doing comprehensive planning. The program is not an exact blueprint to be rigidly followed but rather a broad outline of the more important tasks of the planning process and how they mesh with each other.

We began by saying that comprehensive planning is both a difficult and an essential task. But what makes planning essential? Why is it so important to think about the future "in a systematic way"? And more to the point, what is the value of comprehensive planning to the people of the Virgin Islands?

In a word, the value of planning is COMMITMENT. This means: first, that the development of a comprehensive plan requires a broad and substantial public agreement....a unified vision of what life ought to be; and second, that

adoption of such a plan obligates public decision makers to stick by the goals and objectives set forth. The main ingredient is mutual trust. It is precisely this quality that is required for a society to deal effectively with an uncertain future. In short, the function of a comprehensive plan is to attempt to preview the future state of the Virgin Islands and to help create a unified vision of what such a future state should be.

This report is an invitation to all people seriously committed to the future of the Virgin Islands. It is an initial step in the hard task of uniting our ideas and forging a common vision of VI2000.

2

REVIEWING PREVIOUS PLANS

There have been four separate comprehensive plans written for the Virgin Islands since the early 1940's. Each one of them is unique. Each one stresses particular kinds of problems and offers different solutions. But, as any reader will quickly note, specific suggestions are sometimes repeated in two or more plans; or different authors use the same population projections for figuring future needs. In short, each comprehensive plan stands on its own, but at the same time contains common ideas or themes linking it to the rest.

In this section we want first of all to examine each of the plans close up: What is the main emphasis of the plan; what are the basic assumptions; what planning techniques does the author use; how does the plan square with reality? In each case our analysis will follow a consistent format. First we present the basic background facts including plan title, author, and

date of publication. Then follows a summary of the factual content of the plan; a summary that strives to give, wherever possible, something of the flavor and texture of the written document.

After we study the four comprehensive plans as individual pieces, we compare them together as a group. Our ultimate purpose is to gather fruitful ideas that may be successfully employed in the development of a new comprehensive plan. At the very least, this analysis should point up the pitfalls to be avoided. Here are the plan summaries:

TITLE: A Development Plan for the Virgin Islands
of the United States

DATED: June, 1943

AUTHOR: Frederic Bartlett, National Resources
Planning Board

PAGES: 53

TIME FRAME: Not specified

SUMMARY:

As the title implies, this is primarily an economic development proposal. Yet, unlike typical development plans, it is NOT growth-oriented. In fact, the plan assumes that "gradually total (Virgin Islands) population will return at least to its 1930 figure," of 22,000 people.

Having identified the major problems facing the Virgin Islands as (1) family instability (2) under-utilization of manpower and (3) overdependence on Federal money, the Development Plan proposes the initiation of a homestead/artisan economy. The suggested development strategy is self-sufficiency. The plan estimates that about 15,000 people can be supported "comfortably" through agriculture, livestock raising, fishing, cottage industries, and so on. The basic approach of the plan is, first, to assume an agricultural/handicraft economy, second, to survey the extent of resources, third, to calculate the population that these resources will support.

What happens if the population rises above 15,000 persons? The language of the Development Plan is clear: "There are several programs which might be undertaken---one which in past has been most acceptable is emigration." In other words, re-settlement of population elsewhere. The plan continues: "Another program to adjust population is education. Such a program should include teaching in schools, but not be limited to formal channels. It would be disseminated through church and other adult groups ---" In plain English, the reference here is to birth control methods.

The Development Plan is an island-wide plan. That is to say, while urban areas appear on the map of "suggested land uses", the detail of those areas is lacking. The reason for this is fairly obvious: Since the proposals focus on agriculture as the economic base, the agricultural potential of the islands as a whole becomes the prime consideration. Urban land is simply assumed to remain unchanged.

TITLE: Proposed Master Plans of Urban Areas-
Virgin Islands

DATED: February, 1950

AUTHOR: Frank T. Martocci

PAGES: 27, Including Appendix

TIME FRAME: 1980

SUMMARY:

The crux of the Martocci Plan is housing. To be sure, it talks of population growth, thoroughfares, commercial areas, industrial areas, port development, hospitals and so on. But the plan is aimed primarily at identifying those areas where "slum clearance" and "redevelopment" --- Federal programs that were new in 1950 --- may be applied locally.

The plan identifies four major problems in the Virgin Islands: "poor housing, lack of public facilities and services, a low income level, and a low standard of health." It goes on to indicate two outstanding resources. They are: The architectural heritage (which presumably attracts tourists) and the availability of Federal money.

The bulk of the plan is a list of specific opinions and recommendations on land uses and circulation within the urbanized areas of Charlotte Amalie, Christiansted and Frederiksted. Here is an example: "15. Airports:

The present airport at Manning Bay (now Alexander Hamilton) is of sufficient size to take care of Christiansted as well as Frederiksted. A location somewhat closer to Christiansted would be desirable, but two airports for St. Croix do not seem warranted."

In contrast to the National Resources Board Plan, the Martocci Plan is a "cities-only" plan. It assumes that the remainder of the islands will stay the same. It does not mention St. John at all!

Of all the recommendations, those pertaining to housing get the most detailed elaboration. The plan suggests potential places for further residential expansion at the urban edges and it proposes that certain slum areas be cleared to allow new building within urban areas.

But Martocci goes beyond just designating sites for slum clearance. He spells out how the projects will be accomplished: "under Title III, Public Housing is expected to provide --- 100 acres" In no other instance does the author say how his recommendations are to be carried out other than "through the establishment of a Planning agency."

TITLE: The Master Plan for the island of St. Thomas
and the town of Charlotte Amalie, Virgin Islands,
United States of America

DATED: January, 1958 - (revision of 1954 original)

AUTHOR: Eduardo Baranano

PAGES: 124 with tables plus a separate set of maps
(17 pages)

TIME FRAME: 1980

SUMMARY:

This is really two separately written plans: One for the island of St. Thomas and the other for the city of Charlotte Amalie. The theme, common to both, is Tourism. Or to be exact: How to encourage the tourist industry through land use planning.

Starting with the assumption that "the tourist trade --- will steadily increase ---" Baranano concludes: "the landscape constitutes, indeed, the great asset of St. Thomas." His plan is a lesson in how to enhance the landscape and create real estate values.

The author lists about a dozen major recommendations. They are presented here, refined to their essence:

1. Specify locations for exclusive "tourist residential" uses; develop tourist estates and hotel areas.
2. Preserve open space; avoid sprawl; build compactly.
3. Provide community facilities in new urban areas in proportion to population.
4. Undertake a general road construction program - build a by-pass road around Charlotte Amalie at the 200 ft. level.
5. Improve public utilities throughout the island.
6. Prepare a soil conservation program.
7. Promote reforestation and terrace agriculture practices.
8. Zone the island in compliance with the Master Plan (Rural Zoning)
9. Prepare construction program for hotels and guest houses.
10. Encourage local and continental financial institutions in investing (real estate and housing) in St. Thomas.

11. Prepare six-year Capital Expenditures Program.
12. Protect architecture of downtown area.
13. Rehabilitate and redevelop "obsolete" areas.

Baranano uses population growth estimates that are roughly the same as those found in the Martocci Plan: A 1960 estimate of 32,200 people in the whole territory and a 1980 estimate of 23,200 people to be residing in St. Thomas. The plan assumes the yearly rate of population increase to be 2% between 1950 and 1970 and 1% thereafter.

TITLE: General Physical Plans - St. Thomas, St. John,
St. Croix, Charlotte Amalie, Cruz Bay,
Christiansted, Frederiksted

DATED: July, 1964

AUTHOR: Garold Raff, Jr., Planner-in-Charge;
Virgin Islands Planning Board

PAGES: 326 with maps and appendices

TIME FRAME: 1980

SUMMARY:

"General Physical Plans of the Virgin Islands" contains a series of technical planning studies (population projection, economic survey, community structures description, land value analysis, and so on) along with a number of policy recommendations most of which are graphically summarized in the two land use maps that accompany the document. It is by far the most technically elaborate of all the comprehensive plans.

The Overall Outline is as follows:

(1) Historical and Biographical Sketch of the Virgin Islands:

A short history of the Virgin Islands with discussion of present territorial governmental structure.

(2) Geographical Location:

Physical location of the Virgin Islands, its regional economic and social links to other Caribbean Islands and to the United States.

(3) Characteristics of Population with Projections of Total Number:

A detailed breakdown of population into various categories (nativity, sex, age groups, location by island, etc.); and projection of total population to the year 1980.

(4) The Virgin Islands Economy:

Description of the economic structure of the Virgin Islands; concludes that growth rate of 5% to 7% a year may be expected through 1980.

(5) Community Structure Physical:

- A. Physiographic Features:
Description of topography and soils on each island.
- B. Population Distribution:
Present population is broken down by census quarter and urban area. Then the projected 1980 population is apportioned to each quarter and urban area on basis of topography and expected future land costs.
- C. Systems Analysis - Utilities:
Summarizes current location, extent and condition of water, sewer, facilities; recommends new facilities based on 1980 population projections.
- D. Inter-Island Transportation - Traffic and facilities:
Establishes current volumes of air and sea traffic (passenger and cargo) and projects traffic to year 1980, among various recommendations is relocation of Truman Airport to Lagoon area.

(6) Private Sector Investment - Land Use and Land Value Analysis:

Plots 1960 land values per square foot for urbanized areas; correlates land values with types of land use; suggests distribution of types of land use based on expected future land values.

(7) Community Facilities:

Specific recommendations as to capacity, extent and location, of education, health, social welfare, recreation and public safety facilities.

While the title seems to imply a collection of plans or at least more than one plan, really the document is a single unit. Specific recommendations pertaining to geographical areas (each island for example) occur within every chapter. Unlike Baranano's approach which clearly distinguishes islands and urban areas and provides separate plans for each, General Physical Plans conglomerates various geographical areas under a single topic. If anything, the last chapter of the plan might be considered as a general plan element (the community facilities element). Or the sub-chapter on utilities might also be considered as an element. But the document as a whole is written as a single integrated plan.

CONCLUSIONS

So much for the individual plan summaries. Now what lessons do these past plans teach and how can we apply them in producing a brand new plan? What appears to be the major short-comings and strengths of these documents when we view them collectively in retrospect?

Perhaps the most obvious feature of the plans is that (with the exception of the most recent one) they are the work of outside consultants. Of course, the consultants had to study the local situation and familiarize themselves with local problems. Naturally, they had to discuss these problems with local people and they had to make numerous site visits. Yet it is very apparent that the orientation of the resulting document depended on who it was written for. In short, each consultant had a specific audience toward whom he focused his ideas.

With Bartlett, the audience was the National Resources Planning Board, a wartime creation whose primary objective was the efficient use of natural resources and manpower. Accordingly, Bartlett's major concern was that the Virgin Islands should not be a drain on the United States Treasury. Similarly Martocci and Baranano have audiences too. Martocci the Housing Authority, and Baranano a newly formed Planning Board, eager to develop the (tourist trade) economy of the territory. The point is that whenever outside consultants are relied upon, the scope of their final document tends to coincide with the interests of the agency that hired them.

A second feature common to all the plans (except for Bartlett) is that they are "growth-accommodating" or "growth-inducing" plans. The presumption in all cases is that the Virgin Islands will experience a substantial rate of economic and population growth in the future and that it must be accommodated. The purpose of the plans centered on how to physically accommodate all the activities with the least amount of friction. Nowhere are any concepts of limitations to growth introduced. The only plan which does not presume future growth is the Bartlett Plan. Its aim is to show how to stabilize the population relative to the land resources. In this sense, the Bartlett plan is the only one that directly addresses the question of environment-population balance.

Thirdly, each of the comprehensive plans had to grapple with both regional and local issues simultaneously. Generally, the authors chose to emphasize one over the other. For example, Bartlett is really a regional plan. He gives no detail about what specific urban areas would contain or how they would be arranged physically. Martocci, on the other hand, deals only with urban areas.

One of the better characteristics of the Baranano Plan is that the author divided it into separate regional and local plans. This has a couple of important consequences: First, it makes the plan easier to comprehend by the reader. Those features that are of territory-wide interest are placed together and those of purely local interest are together. Second, it makes updating and changing the plan a lot simpler.

It is possible for instance to make minor adjustments in specific local plans without altering the basic regional plan.

It is difficult, if not impossible to evaluate the total impact of these previous comprehensive plans on the Virgin Islands. Many of the recommendations have been carried out. But just as many have not. And, of course, it is not possible to say with certainty that a particular recommendation was accomplished because of the plan. In other words, there is often no direct way to interpret cause and effect relationships.

Perhaps what can be said is that, taken altogether, these plans form a "tradition" of comprehensive planning in the Virgin Islands. By coincidence, plans have been prepared every ten years: To be exact 1943, 1954, and 1964. Most important, their preparation required the involvement and cooperation of numerous Virgin Islanders coming together to reflect on the future of the Territory. It is primarily in this sense that these previous comprehensive plans have set a long-range pattern.

3

CURRENT PLANNING LAWS

One of the most important results that can be attributed to the previous comprehensive plans has been the codification of the planning process. This was accomplished in 1970 by Act 2774 which added a new Chapter to Title 3 of Virgin Islands Code. In its entirety, the added chapter creates the Virgin Islands Planning Office and specifies its organizational structure. It also provides broad guidelines for the preparation of comprehensive plans and development programs.

Regarding the authority and responsibility of the Planning Office, the Code is quite explicit. In particular, the comprehensive planning function is outlined in detail. Rather than attempt to paraphrase the law, we will simply present it as it appears (3 V.I.C. Chapter 2):

§35. Virgin Islands Comprehensive Plan

(a) The Governor, through the Planning Office, shall prepare, and upon legislative approval, issue and have in continuous process of revision, the long-range comprehensive plan based on studies, plans, needs and operations of every department, agency and institution of the Government of the Virgin Islands, and the Federal Government, taking into account the existing and prospective resources and capabilities of the territorial government. The comprehensive plan shall identify and stress island-wide goals, objectives and opportunities.

(b) The comprehensive plan shall provide long-range guidance for the physical, economic and social development of the Virgin Islands and shall include, but not be limited to the following:

(1) population and economic analysis with projections for each Island and major population area of the Virgin Islands;

(2) general land use policies for urban development, agriculture, industry, recreation, beaches and shorelines, sand removal, open space, and other purposes;

(3) policy and goals for housing and urban renewal;

(4) policy for the balanced development of airport, highway, and public transportation facilities;

(5) policy for health services, manpower planning, employment opportunities, education, elimination of poverty, law enforcement, and other programs;

(6) projection of needs for public facilities, including but not limited to, headquarters and Island office buildings, colleges, health and welfare, and correctional institutions;

(7) recreation and open spaces for government facilities, major local facilities, and Federal recreation areas;

(8) inventory and appraisal of the Virgin Islands natural resources setting forth policy for their prudent exploitation, conservation, and replenishment; and

(9) policies for intragovernmental relations and governmental structure.

(§35 Con't.)

(c) The comprehensive plan and revisions thereof shall be transmitted to the Legislature for its consideration and action. They shall be referred to committee as provided in section 39 of this chapter. The plan and revision thereof, when approved by the Legislature, shall become effective as governmental policy.

§36. Long-Range Functional Plans

(a) The Planning Office may prepare, or cause to be prepared, and issue on behalf of the Governor, a series of long-range functional development plans relating, but not necessarily limited to outdoor recreation, water resources, transportation, housing, education, economic development, health services and facilities, employment, poverty, manpower planning, and other broad areas of governmental responsibility.

(b) To assist in the development of plans and programs of the Government, the Governor, through the Planning Office, may direct each department, agency, and institution of the Government to designate from among its employees and officers, a planning officer or representative who shall be responsible for the planning and coordination of the activities and responsibilities of the department, agency or institution. Such planning officer or representative shall coordinate program plans prepared for each area of program responsibility within his agency.

(c) Long-range functional plans and revisions thereof shall be transmitted to the Legislature for its consideration and action. They shall be referred to committee as provided in section 39 of this chapter. The plans and revisions thereof, when approved by the Legislature, shall become effective as governmental policy.

Now what are the major implications of this law?

They may be summarized as follows:

FIRST: The Planning Office is expected to collaborate fully with all branches and all levels of government. The law recognizes that it is virtually impossible to plan without a firm knowledge of the practical difficulties encountered by other government agencies. To do so would be to operate in a vacuum and thus render any planning efforts less than adequate. "Keep in touch!" that is the first message.

SECOND: The Law plainly emphasizes the role of the Planning Office to suggest and promote public policies. It is expected that analysis of existing trends in population size, social interaction, and economic conditions will lead toward clear-cut policy guidelines, and that such guidelines will serve to give direction to both the executive branch and to the Legislature. Above all, the policies must fairly reflect the goals of Virgin Islanders on the one hand and the potentials of the environment setting on the other.

THIRD: The language of the code emphasizes a functionally-oriented approach to comprehensive planning. It stresses the importance of identifying the inter-relationships between, say, community health needs and transportation services. In addition, an island-wide perspective is encouraged. The comprehensive plan is a regional as well as a local plan.

TO SUM

UP: The legal mandate for comprehensive planning in the Virgin Islands is broad and far-reaching. It recognizes the necessity for collaborative effort in its accomplishment; it stresses the role of the Planning Office as a policy-formulating and policy-evaluating instrument; and it emphasizes the need to approach planning organically--seeing the parts in relation to the whole.

4

PLANNING OFFICE QUESTIONS

Since the completion of General Physical Plans in 1964, the focus of the Virgin Islands Planning Office has been concentrated on practical measures designed to implement the major recommendations of the plan. In particular, the Planning Office was responsible for writing and recommending the present Zoning Law and for preparing various land use planning reports. These reports include a vehicle parking study for the town of Frederiksted, St. Croix and development plans for Estate Bordeaux and Estate Nazareth on St. Thomas.

In the last ten years, the Virgin Islands have experienced rapid growth in both population and economic activity. It is generally felt by the Planning Office and by various citizens groups that the time is now ripe to update the 1964 plan. Moreover, the revision of the Virgin Islands Code (referred to in the preceding section) provides a clear mandate to the Planning Office to take the lead in updating and otherwise

revising the comprehensive plan.

With these considerations in mind, the staff of the Planning Office convened in early March of this year to discuss how to proceed with the task of comprehensive planning. Prior to the meeting each staff member received the list of questions that is reproduced here on pages 21 and 22 .

DEVELOPING A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FRAMEWORK
FOR THE UNITED STATES VIRGIN ISLANDS

Questions for Discussion

SCOPE OF THE PLAN:

1. What basic functional content areas should the Comprehensive Plan include?
2. What time frame is appropriate? Year 2000?

GENERAL APPROACH TO PLANNING:

1. What emphasis should be given to planning process and what to concrete documents?
2. How are such non-technical inputs as goals, objectives, strategies to be decided upon?
3. How to integrate technical and non-technical inputs?
4. Who are the persons or groups most interested in doing planning? How should their input be evaluated? How incorporated into the Plan?
5. How can the Planning process be coordinated (especially among agencies)?

PLAN PURPOSES:

1. Who are the likely Comprehensive Plan users?
2. What purposes may the Plan serve for its various users?
3. In general, should the Plan propose specific solutions or merely suggest alternatives?

PLAN FORMAT:

1. What is the best method of expressing various kinds of information or ideas?
2. How does the form of the Plan relate to its purpose(s)?
3. What is relative utility of written document vs three-dimensional modes or other more visual means of expression?
4. What role could computers play in providing a useful format?
5. How fixed or how flexible should the form be?

CONTENT EMPHASES:

1. Should Plan stress specific problem areas and potential solutions? Or should it stress larger societal issues?
2. What problems or issues stand out as most pressing?
3. How can the Plan best express a concern for "Caribbean Planning?"
4. What emphasis should be given to regional planning and what to local?
5. What relative stress should be given to planning techniques and what to recommendations?
6. Who should handle what content areas? Which persons or agencies should be responsible for what?

LEVEL OF DETAIL:

1. How detailed should the Comprehensive Plan be?
2. How to treat entire islands and urban areas--simultaneously? Separately?

The rest of this section is a summary of the discussion that occurred. It is structured to fit the format of the question sheet.

SCOPE OF THE PLAN:

It was the general opinion that more than a simple updating of figures and numerical projections is needed. Instead, the task should be viewed as starting afresh with a new comprehensive plan, retaining the good features of previous plans but ignoring the out-of-date portions. The content areas which the plan addresses would be those outlined in the law; namely, economic, social, and physical development. However, more emphasis should be placed on an integrated presentation of policies and ideas. The possibility of doing area development plans as well as functional plans was discussed. Overall, the feeling of the staff was that 2000 A.D. as a target date was not unreasonable, although it should be very clear to anyone reading the plan that projections for a twenty five year period are not very reliable.

GENERAL APPROACH:

There was unanimous agreement on the fact that comprehensive planning must include the opinions and ideas of all the people of the Virgin Islands. Planning that is not in touch with people is a sterile and useless technical exercise. The approach to planning therefore must recognize the importance of citizen inputs and provide for adequate means of their incorporation.

PLAN PURPOSES:

There are two basic purposes of comprehensive planning. First, the plan is a vehicle for the expression of citizen ideas and second, it is a guideline for use by public officials in decision making. The comprehensive plan is a public expression of policy. This means, therefore, that the policies must be written in clear, concise, unequivocal language.

PLAN FORMAT:

The format should be easy to use. In particular there should be ample cross-referencing so that people may find information rapidly. The entire plan would be contained in a series of volumes (elements) and the key volume would be a concise summary of goals, objectives, and policies found in the other volumes.

CONTENT EMPHASIS:

There was substantial agreement that the comprehensive plan should address the problems confronting the Virgin Islands in the areas of (1) population growth (2) economic dependence and (3) environmental quality. Problem definition should be a major part of the planning process. It is particularly important that every citizen have the opportunity to give his input into the definition of problem areas.

LEVEL OF DETAIL:

Since it was suggested that the format of the comprehensive plan would be a series of documents, level of detail would present no difficulty. A single element could be either very general or very specific depending on how much information was available.

5

CHARTING A NEW COURSE

The main thrust of this report is to suggest how we can begin a systematic look at the future of the Virgin Islands. So far, we have reviewed the methods that have been used in the past and essayed their results. It is time now to chart a possible future course of action that builds upon both past experience and present needs.

In this final section, we wish to develop a preliminary program design. As we said earlier, this is not to be viewed as a rigid unalterable blueprint. It is more like a sketch plan that outlines the major features and suggests how they might relate to one another. As the comprehensive planning process unfolds, the design will be revised and refined and revised again. In short, the program design is flexible to meet changing ideas and new demands.

A central concept used in laying out the design has been to separate those program components that are mostly technical from those that are mostly "directional". If the previous comprehensive plans have demonstrated anything, it is that planning technique may be well-suited to developing alternatives, but only informed human judgement can select among alternatives. It is this judgemental quality that we have termed "directional".

In addition to dividing the program components on the basis of technical and directional inputs, we have also indicated the approximate time frame in which the components should be accomplished. The major reason for specifying the time frames (or phases) is that at certain critical points in the comprehensive planning process it is necessary to "coordinate" the two types of inputs. It is like periodically letting the left hand know what the right hand is doing.

As we presently envision it, the phasing would be done along the following lines:

PHASE 1 is the gearing-up time. The technical work would involve the gathering of information and making of preliminary projections. Citizen groups and interested individuals as well as official advisory bodies would be contacted. It is estimated that this start-up period would last four months.

PHASE 2 represents the first attempt at coordination of inputs. At that time, the Planning Office will present its preliminary findings and receive comments from citizen groups. This phase should take no more than a month to complete.

PHASE 3 involves the preparation and circulation of a preliminary comprehensive plan for the Virgin Islands. It is anticipated that the proposed plan would receive the widest possible public exposure. Comments and responses would be recorded, and where feasible, included in the revised document. Altogether this phase would last seven months.

PHASE 4 is the final revision of the Comprehensive Plan and its submission to the Governor and Legislature. This can be accomplished in about six months.

In sum, it is anticipated that the development of a new Comprehensive Plan for the Virgin Islands will require eighteen months to complete. Figure 1 on the following two pages is a diagram showing the overall flow of the comprehensive planning process. It also indicates the major activities that must be accomplished within each phase.

The remainder of this section gives a more detailed description of each of the job components of the program. The format that we use gives: The name of the component and a short description, the participants' responsibilities, and the expected product or outcome. The numbers assigned to each job component are keyed to the flow diagram in Figure 1.

FIGURE 1

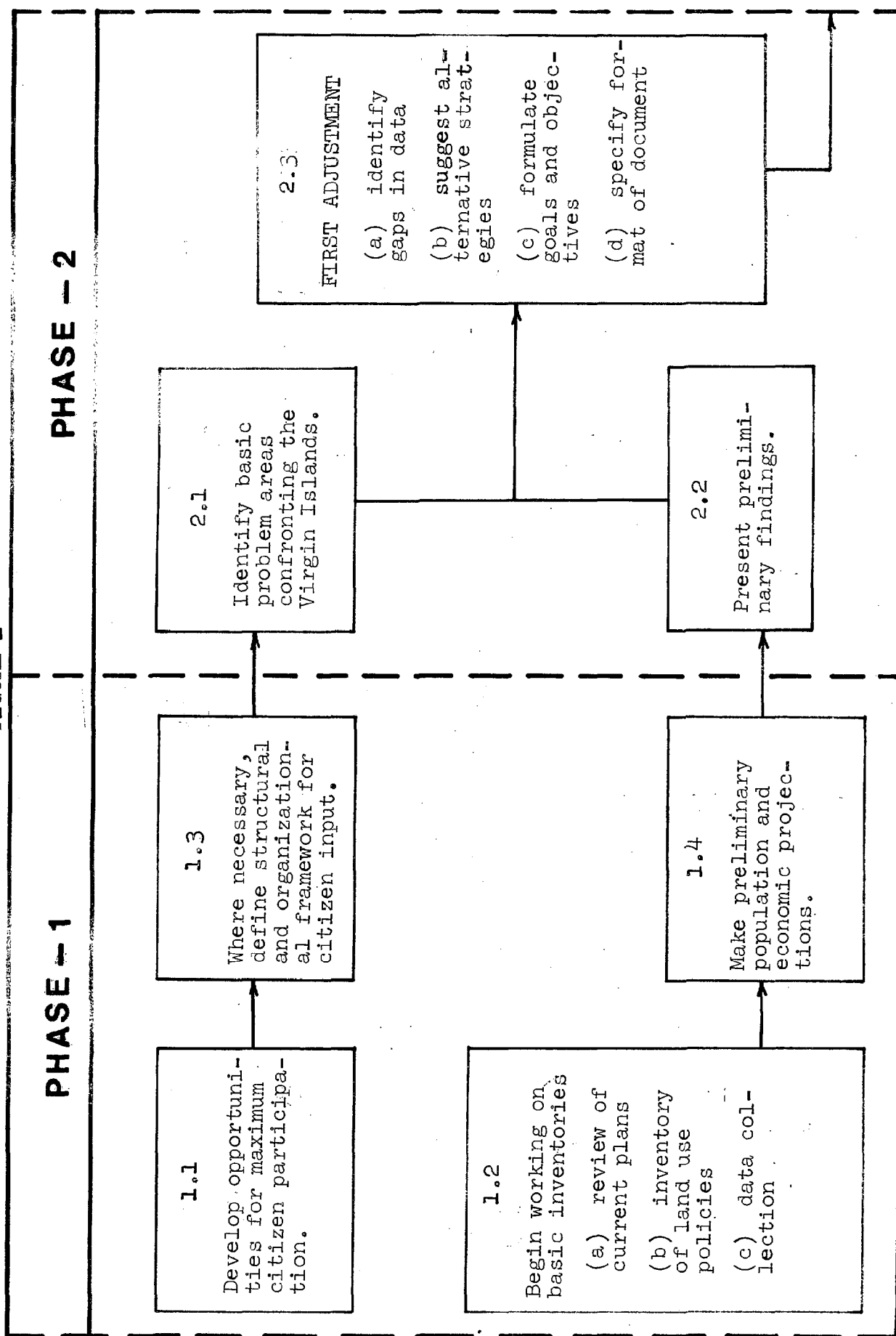
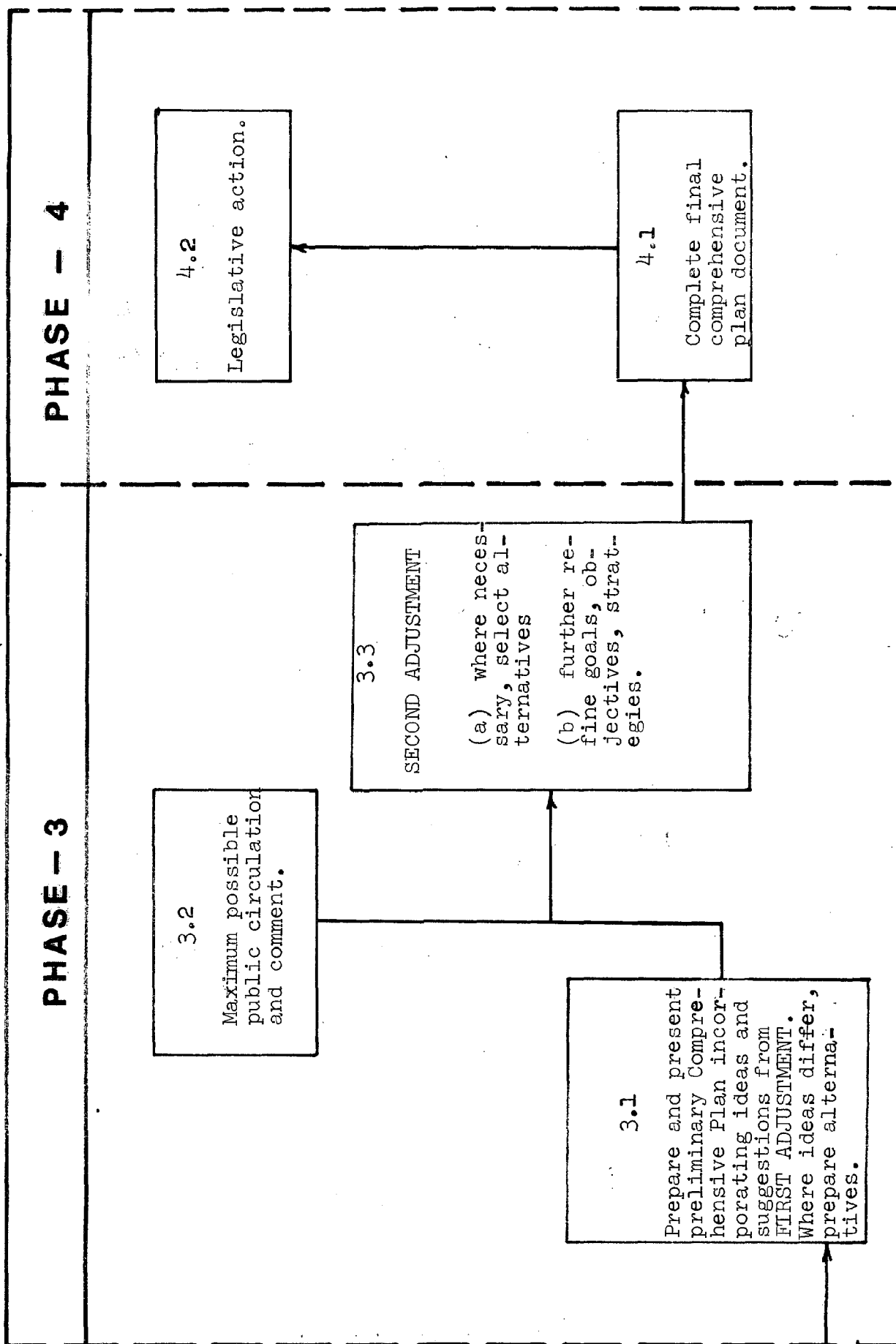


FIGURE 1 (Con't.)



COMPONENT TITLE: Inviting Citizen Participation

COMPONENT NUMBER: 1.1

DESCRIPTION: There are numerous existing organized citizens groups that have an interest in comprehensive planning. There are also official advisory commissions and citizens at large who have an interest. The purpose of this component is to identify all interested persons and to extend an invitation to participate.

RESPONSIBILITY: At first, the major responsibility will rest with the Planning Office. At later phases it will be a joint effort among various citizens groups.

PRODUCT OR OUTCOME: (1) List of citizen participants.
(2) Accumulation of suggestions and ideas for organizing the planning process.
(3) News releases and perhaps newsletter.

COMPONENT TITLE: Basic Inventories

COMPONENT NUMBER: 1.2

DESCRIPTION: Inventories will include policies and plans as well as factual information. Basic data will include: population, soils, and topography, economic data, transportation, environmental hazards, and so on. Inventories will then be put in tabular or graphic format.

RESPONSIBILITY: Planning Office will coordinate with other government agencies to gather information that is not already available.

PRODUCT OR INCOME: Information will be used as input in component 1.4 and 2.2.

COMPONENT TITLE: Organizational Framework for Citizen Input

COMPONENT NUMBER: 1.3

DESCRIPTION: The basic purpose of this component is to encourage communication on a regular basis among all groups and persons interested in comprehensive planning. It also involves the co-ordination of Planning Office staff work and citizen inputs.

RESPONSIBILITY: Planning Advisory Board and Senate Committee on Housing, Planning and Consumer Affairs with assistance of Planning Office Staff.

PRODUCT OR OUTCOME: Regular newsletter, meetings to identify problems.

COMPONENT TITLE: Preliminary projections

COMPONENT NUMBER: 1.4

DESCRIPTION: This is the point at which the data gathering by the technical staff is used to project future patterns. Not only will population and economic activity be projected, but also policies with respect to land use will be projected also. This will allow for an analysis of conflicting policies.

RESPONSIBILITY: Planning Office Staff.

PRODUCT OR OUTCOME: Material to be used in component 2.2.

COMPONENT TITLE: Problem Identification

COMPONENT NUMBER: 2.1

DESCRIPTION: This represents the culmination of an "idea-gathering" campaign where citizens are encouraged to express what they foresee as present and future problems in the Virgin Islands.

RESPONSIBILITY: Planning Advisory Board and/or other citizens groups.

PRODUCT OR OUTCOME: (1) A written document listing all relevant comments.
(2) Newspaper coverage.

COMPONENT TITLE: Preliminary findings

COMPONENT NUMBER: 2.2

DESCRIPTION: Presentation by Planning Office Staff to all interested citizens groups of the analysis performed in component 1.4. The format of presentation will depend on the amount and nature of material to be covered.

RESPONSIBILITY: Planning Office Staff.

PRODUCT OR OUTCOME: Possible products might include a slide show or written document.

COMPONENT TITLE: First adjustment

COMPONENT NUMBER: 2.3

DESCRIPTION: This is the first point in the planning process where the citizen groups and technical staff compare notes. The purpose of the adjustment is to elicit as much comment as possible concerning the technical work. Specifically, it is the time when gaps in data will be identified, alternative planning strategies will be discussed, goals and objectives will be reformulated and the physical format of the document will be specified.

RESPONSIBILITY: Joint effort of Planning Office and citizen groups.

PRODUCT OR OUTCOME: The information serves as input into component 3.1.

COMPONENT TITLE: Preliminary Comprehensive Plan

COMPONENT NUMBER: 3.1

DESCRIPTION: Incorporating the inputs from previous component, Planning Office Staff prepares a preliminary comprehensive plan document. The document should be similar in all respects to the anticipated final document.

RESPONSIBILITY: Planning Office Staff and planners from other government agencies.

PRODUCT OR OUTCOME: A preliminary comprehensive plan and a summary of the plan for news releases and circulation purposes.

COMPONENT TITLE: Circulation of Preliminary Plan

COMPONENT NUMBER: 3.2

DESCRIPTION: The Preliminary Plan and the summary will be widely publicized in all news media, including radio, television, newspapers, magazines, etc. In addition, the Planning Office Staff will prepare a presentation for interested groups.

RESPONSIBILITY: Planning Advisory Board, citizen groups, news media.

PRODUCT OR OUTCOME: It is expected that at least half of the Virgin Islands residents will be aware of the preliminary plan and its meaning.

COMPONENT TITLE: **Second adjustment**

COMPONENT NUMBER: **3.3**

DESCRIPTION: If the preliminary plan was in the form of a comparison of alternative futures, this adjustment would be the opportunity for selection of alternatives. Moreover, it is anticipated that in the general public discussion of the preliminary plan, suggestions for refining goals and objectives will be forthcoming.

RESPONSIBILITY: Planning Advisory Board and citizen groups.

PRODUCT OR OUTCOME: The results of the adjustment serve as inputs into the final plan preparation.

COMPONENT TITLE: Final Comprehensive Plan

COMPONENT NUMBER: **4.1**

DESCRIPTION: Planning Office Staff assembles all suggested changes in the preliminary plan and re-writes document.

RESPONSIBILITY: Planning Office Staff.

PRODUCT OR OUTCOME: Final Comprehensive Plan document plus all background documents.

COMPONENT TITLE: Legislative action

COMPONENT NUMBER: 4.2

DESCRIPTION: Plan is formally submitted to the Virgin Islands Legislature for its review and consideration. Planning Office Staff and citizens will be prepared to testify.

RESPONSIBILITY: Planning Advisory Board, Governor's Office.

OUTCOME: An officially adopted comprehensive plan for the Virgin Islands.

SUMMARY:

The possible ways of approaching comprehensive planning are many. In this program design we have outlined one such approach that appears workable and well-suited to the Virgin Islands. Our major emphasis is directed at engaging the fullest citizen involvement. The concern for ample citizen input and guidance stems from our review of previous comprehensive plans and from the general tenor of the present law pertaining to the planning process.

Basically the program concept involves successive refinement of ideas. Inputs are bounced back and forth between technical planning staff on the one hand and citizen groups on the other. As a result, the end product (which we hope can be achieved within a year and a half) should reflect a well-rounded and carefully constructed point of view.

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